

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

C O N F I D E N T I A L MADRID 001118

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 03/22/2015

TAGS: [PHUM](#) [PREL](#) [CU](#) [SP](#)

SUBJECT: MFA ON CUBA CHR RESOLUTION, CUBAN FOREIGN MINISTER VISIT

REF: A. A) MADRID 1030

[1](#)B. B) STATE 44494

Classified By: Poloff Ricardo Zuniga; reasons 1.4 (B) and (D).

[1](#)1. (C) MFA Director General for Latin America Javier Sandomingo requested a meeting with poloff on March 21 to discuss Spain's position on the USG draft Cuba human rights resolution and to provide a readout on the recent visit of Cuban Foreign Minister Felipe Perez Roque. On the draft Cuba UNCHR resolution, Sandomingo said that Spain was consulting within the EU regarding the USG draft, but expected Spain would co-sponsor the resolution. He described the USG resolution as "very practical" and crafted along the procedural lines Spain would have favored had it been a voting member in this year's CHR. Sandomingo hoped to be able to provide a final Spanish decision on whether it would co-sponsor the USG resolution within the next several days. He was caught off guard when poloff noted that MFA Director General for Foreign Policy Rafael Dezcallar had seemed to indicate somewhat less support for the USG draft in a discussion with Charge and had suggested Spain might not co-sponsor, pending a review of Cuba's hint that it would be willing to hold human rights discussions with the EU in exchange for the EU's withdrawal of support for the CHR Cuba resolution (Ref A). Sandomingo said he would check with Dezcallar, but that in principle the GOS intended to continue its past support for Cuba human rights resolutions since there had been no significant change in Cuba's harsh political climate. MFA Cuba desk officer Pablo Gomez de Olea confirmed March 22 that Spain would join the EU consensus on the USG draft, which he expected to be a consensus in favor of co-sponsorship of the resolution.

//PEREZ ROQUE VISIT//

[1](#)2. (C) Regarding the March 14-15 visit of Cuban FM Perez Roque to Spain, Sandomingo said that the GOS had been disappointed that Perez Roque had made no public or private concessions during his visit. The MFA had not expected the Cuban government to publicly announce mass releases of political prisoners, but had hoped that Perez Roque would recognize the political risks assumed by the Zapatero government with respect to its Cuba policy and give private assurances of upcoming prisoner releases. Instead, Perez Roque asserted that the Cuban government was bound by the rule of law and that only Cuban courts could order prisoner releases. Sandomingo called this assertion ludicrous and said it indicated that Castro remained in a wait-and-see posture with respect to the EU and in no mood to make concessions. Sandomingo was not confident that Castro would take the politically-expedient measure of releasing at least a few prisoner prior to the EU's June review of the suspension of the restrictive measures on Cuba.

//SUPPORT FOR MAY 20 CUBAN OPPOSITION EVENT//

[1](#)3. (C) Sandomingo said the MFA had pressed Perez Roque hard on the need to demonstrate greater political liberalization in Cuba, warning Perez Roque not to arrest or abuse Cuban participants in the May 20 convention of political groupings in Cuba called by dissident figure Martha Beatriz Roque. Perez Roque reportedly denounced the planned May 20 gathering as a "provocation by the USG and its mercenaries." Sandomingo and Gomez de Olea said that the MFA is considering ways to support the May 20 event, possibly by sending an EU representative and/or issuing a declaration of support. They said their plans to support the dissident event were complicated by suspicions that the event would be heavily infiltrated and possibly manipulated by the Cuban government, but indicated that the need to support the principle of freedom of assembly overrode these concerns.

MANZANARES